

§ 21.4002

(c) Authority is delegated to the Director, Education Service, to exercise the functions required of the Secretary for:

(1) Waiver of penalties for conflicting interests as provided by § 21.4005;

(2) Actions otherwise required of State approving agencies under § 21.4150(c);

(3) Approval of courses under § 21.4250(c) (2).

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 512(c))

(d) The Under Secretary for Benefits is delegated responsibility for obtaining evidence of voluntary compliance for vocational rehabilitation, education and special restorative training to implement Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964. Authority is delegated to him or her and his or her designee to take any necessary action as to programs of vocational rehabilitation, education or special restorative training under 38 U.S.C. Chapters 31, 34, 35 and 36 for the purpose of securing evidence of voluntary compliance directly or through the agencies to whom the Secretary has delegated responsibility for various schools or training establishments to implement §§ 18.1 through 18.13 of this chapter.

(e) The Under Secretary for Benefits is delegated responsibility for obtaining evidence of voluntary compliance from recognized national organizations whose representatives are afforded space and office facilities in facilities under his or her jurisdiction.

(f) The Under Secretary for Benefits is delegated responsibility to enter into an agreement with the Federal Trade Commission to utilize, where appropriate, its services and facilities, consistent with its available resources, to carry out investigations and make determinations as to enrollment of an eligible veteran or eligible person in any course offered by an institution which utilizes advertising, sales, or enrollment practices of any type which are erroneous, deceptive, or misleading either by actual statement, omission, or intimation.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3696)

(g) Authority is delegated to the Director, Vocational Rehabilitation and Counseling Service to exercise the

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functions required of the Secretary for approval of courses under § 21.4250(c) (1).

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 512(a))

[31 FR 6774, May 6, 1966, as amended at 40 FR 31759, July 29, 1975; 48 FR 37975, Aug. 22, 1983; 50 FR 46764, Nov. 13, 1985; 61 FR 26112, May 24, 1996]

§ 21.4002 Finality of decisions.

(a) The decision of a duly constituted agency of original jurisdiction on which an action was predicated will be final and binding upon all field offices of the Department of Veterans Affairs as to conclusions based on evidence on file at that time and will not be subject to revision on the same factual basis except by duly constituted appellate authorities or except as provided in § 21.4003. (See §§ 19.192 and 19.183 of this chapter.)

(b) Current determinations of line of duty, character of discharge, relationship, and other pertinent elements of eligibility for a program of education or special restorative training, made by either an adjudicative activity or an insurance activity by application of the same criteria and based on the same facts are binding one upon the other in the absence of clear and unmistakable error.

[31 FR 6774, May 6, 1966, as amended at 48 FR 37976, Aug. 22, 1983]

§ 21.4003 Revision of decisions.

The revision of a decision on which an action was predicated will be subject to the following sections:

(a) Clear and unmistakable error, § 3.105(a) of this chapter;

(b) Difference of opinion, § 3.105(b) of this chapter;

(c) Character of discharge, § 3.105(c) of this chapter;

(d) Severance of service connection, § 3.105(d) of this chapter;

(e) Veteran no longer totally and permanently disabled, § 21.4135(o).

§ 21.4005 Conflicting interests.

(a) *General.* (1) An officer or employee of VA will be immediately dismissed from his or her office or employment, if while such an officer or employee he or she has owned any interest in, or received any wages, salary, dividends, profits, gratuities, or services from,

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any school operated for profit in which a veteran or eligible person was pursuing a course of education under 10 U.S.C. chapter 1606 or 38 U.S.C. chapters 30, 32, 34, 35 or 36.

(Authority: 10 U.S.C. 16136(b), 38 U.S.C. 3034(a), 3241, 3683(a))

(2) VA will discontinue payments under §21.4153 to a State approving agency when the Secretary finds that any person who is an officer or employee of a State approving agency has, while he or she was such an officer or employee, owned any interest in, or received any wages, salary, dividends, profits, gratuities, or services from a school operated for profit in which a veteran or eligible person was pursuing a course of education or training under 10 U.S.C. chapter 1606 or 38 U.S.C. chapters 30, 32, 34, 35 or 36 unless that agency takes, without delay such steps as may be necessary to terminate the employment of such a person. VA will not resume payments while such a person is an officer or employee of

(i) The State approving agency, or

(ii) State Department of Veterans' Affairs, or

(iii) State Department of Education.

(3) A State approving agency will not approve any course offered by a school operated for profit and, if any such course has been approved, will disapprove each such course, if it finds that any officer or employee of the Department of Veterans Affairs, or the State approving agency owns an interest in, or receives any wages, salary, dividends, profits, gratuities, or service from, such school.

(4) The Secretary may, after reasonable notice, and public hearings if requested, waive in writing the application of this paragraph in the case of any officer or employee of the Department of Veterans Affairs or of a State approving agency, if it is found that no detriment will result to the United States or to veterans or eligible persons by reason of such interest or connection of such officer or employee.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3683)

(b) *Waiver.* (1) Where a request is made for waiver of application of paragraph (a)(1) of this section, it will be considered that no detriment will result to the United States or to veterans

or eligible persons by reason of such interest or connection of such officer or employee of the Department of Veterans Affairs, if the officer or employee:

(i) Acquired his or her interest in the school by operation of law, or before the statute became applicable to the officer or employee, and his or her interest has been disposed of and his or her connection discontinued, or

(ii) Meets all of the following conditions:

(a) His or her position involves no policy determinations, at any administrative level, having to do with matters pertaining to payment of educational assistance allowance, or special training allowance.

(b) His or her position has no relationship with the processing of any veteran's or eligible person's application for education or training.

(c) His or her position precludes him or her from taking any adjudicative action on individual applications for education or training.

(d) His or her position does not require him or her to perform duties involved in the investigation of irregular actions on the part of schools or veterans or eligible persons in connection with 10 U.S.C. chapter 1606 or 38 U.S.C. chapters 30, 32, 34, 35 or 36.

(e) His or her position is not connected with the processing of claims by, or payments to, schools, or their students enrolled under the provisions of 10 U.S.C. chapter 1606 or 38 U.S.C. chapters 30, 32, 34, 35 or 36.

(f) His or her work is not connected in any way with the inspection, approval, or supervision of schools desiring to train veterans or eligible persons.

(2) Where a request is made for waiver of application of paragraph (a) (2) of this section, it will be considered that no detriment will result to the United States or to veterans or eligible persons by reason of such interest or connection of such officer or employee of a State approving agency, if the officer or employee:

(i) Acquired his or her interest in the school by operation of law, or before the statute became applicable to the officer or employee, and his or her interest has been disposed of and his or her connection discontinued, or

(ii) Meets all of the following conditions:

(a) His or her position does not require him or her to perform duties involved in the investigation of irregular actions on the part of schools or veterans or eligible persons in connection with 10 U.S.C. chapter 1606 or 38 U.S.C. chapters 30, 32, 34, 35 or 36.

(Authority: 10 U.S.C. 16136(b), 38 U.S.C. 3034(a), 3241, 3683(b))

(b) His or her work is not connected in any way with the inspection, approval, or supervision of schools desiring to train veterans or eligible persons.

(c) *Authority.* (1) Authority is delegated to the Director, Vocational Rehabilitation and Education Service, and to the facility head in the cases of VA employees under his or her jurisdiction, to waive the application of paragraph (a)(1) of this section in the case of any VA employee who meets the criteria of paragraph (b)(1) of this section, and to deny request for a waiver which do not meet those criteria. If the circumstances warrant, a waiver request may be submitted to the Secretary for a decision.

(2) Authority is delegated to the Director, Vocational Rehabilitation and Education Service, in cases of State approving agency employees to waive the application of paragraph (a)(2) of this section in the case of anyone who meets the criteria of paragraph (b)(2) of this section, and to deny requests for a waiver which do not meet those criteria. If the circumstances warrant, a waiver request may be submitted to the Secretary for a decision.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 512(a))

(3) Authority is reserved to the Secretary to waive the requirement of paragraphs (a) (1) and (2) of this section in the case of an officer of the Department of Veterans Affairs or a State approving agency and in the case of any employee of either who does not meet the criteria of paragraph (b) of this section.

(d) *Disapproval of courses.* Where it is found that an officer or employee of the Department of Veterans Affairs has any interest in, or receives any wages, salary, dividends, profits, gratuities, or services from any such school, and

waiver has not been granted, the State approving agency and the school will be notified immediately that the courses offered by the school shall be disapproved, the reason for disapproval, and the conditions under which the disapproval may be lifted.

(e) *Notice to veterans and eligible persons.* The veteran or eligible person will be notified in writing sent to his or her latest address of record when:

(1) The course or courses are disapproved by the State approving agency, or

(2) The State approving agency fails to disapprove the course or courses within 15 days after the date of written notice to the agency, and no waiver has been requested, or

(3) Waiver has been denied.

The veteran or eligible person will be informed that he or she may apply for enrollment in an approved course in another school, but that in the absence of such transfer, educational assistance allowance payments will be discontinued effective the date of discontinuance of the course, or the 30th day following the date of such letter, whichever is earlier.

(f) *Definition of "officer."* For the purposes of this section a person will be considered to be an *officer* of the State approving agency or the Department of Veterans Affairs, when he or she has authority to exercise supervisory authority.

[31 FR 6774, May 6, 1966, as amended at 43 FR 3707, Jan. 27, 1978; 51 FR 16315, May 2, 1986; 61 FR 20728, May 8, 1996]

§ 21.4006 False or misleading statements.

(a) *Payments may not be based on false statements.* Except as provided in this section payments may not be authorized based on a claim where it is found that the school or any person has willfully submitted a false or misleading claim, or that the veteran or eligible person with the complicity of the school or other person has submitted such a claim. A complete report of the facts will be made to the State approving agency, and if in order to the Attorney General of the United States.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3690)